

The

MESSENGER



of OUR LADY OF AFRICA

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MISSIONARY SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF AFRICA (WHITE SISTERS)

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa was founded in 1869 by Cardinal Lavigerie to aid the White Fathers in Christianizing the Moslem and pagan women of Africa and through their means conquer the family and society. The White Sisters cooperate with the White Fathers in all kinds of catechetical, educational, medical and social service works in 138 missions scattered over the vast African Continent.

In their missions the White Sisters conduct 53 hospitals, 44 maternity hospitals, 39 baby welfare centers, 114 dispensaries, 6 leprosaria and visit the sick in their homes. They also have orphanages and homes for the aged. Thus, through the care of the body, souls are won for God. Then for the moral and social education of the women and girls, the Sisters also conduct 45 work-rooms, 239 schools—primary, high, and normal—catechetical classes at the missions and, to lead chosen souls to the Religious Life, 16 Native Novitiates.

Though there are over 1700 White Sisters, the number is far from being sufficient to cope with the present day needs of our missions. Sisters are needed to staff more catechetical classes, grammar, high and normal schools, as well as more hospitals, dispensaries, baby welfare centers, etc.

Doctors, nurses, teachers, also young girls without any special training, who feel called to devote their lives to foreign mission work, would find ample scope for their zeal among the Africans.

The White Sisters receive their religious training and pronounce their first vows in this country before leaving for the missions.

Any young girl who would like to become a White Sister, and thus attain personal sanctification through active work for the evangelization of Africa may apply to:

WHITE SISTERS' NOVITIATE
R R 4, Box 207 Belleville, Illinois

HOW TO HELP THE MISSIONS

By PRAYER:—

Without the grace of God the Missionaries could do nothing for the salvation of souls. By praying for the missionaries you bring down God's blessing upon their apostolic labors.

By SUFFERINGS:—

To unite one's sufferings, trials and hardships to those of Jesus on the Cross and offer them for the salvation of souls.

By ALMS:—

If no one would support the Missionaries they could again do nothing. Your offerings will help to maintain their works.

A NUMBER OF WAYS

Subscribe to our Magazine . . . 1 year	\$ 1.00
Keep a Sanctuary Lamp burning for 10 days	\$ 1.00
Dress a child for First Holy Communion	\$ 2.00
Rescue a pagan baby in view of Baptism	\$ 5.00
Support a Leprosy Patient for a month	\$ 10.00
Ransom a girl from a pagan marriage	\$ 20.00
Adopt an orphan for a year	\$ 50.00
The adoption of a White Sister for a year	\$250.00

Donations from \$1.00 to \$500 (or more) would help to pay a
WHITE SISTER'S JOURNEY TO AFRICA

" . . . as long as you did it to one of these . . . YOU DID IT TO ME "

Our address is:

WHITE SISTERS' CONVENT
319 Middlesex Avenue
Metuchen, N. J.



The pupils like to seek Mary's intercession before school.

MARY AND THE SUDANESE

GREAT IS THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE
MOTHER OF GOD

SINCE DEVOTION to the Queen of Heaven is a guarantee of salvation, the Missionaries strive to impress it on the new converts as well as on the catechumens and the probationists. When the latter have followed catechism instruction faithfully for one year, they receive a decoration—the miraculous medal—that distinguishes them from the pagans. The image of Mary is loyally worn; and if perchance it is lost, no rest can be had until the precious medal is replaced.

When the last year of the catechumenate draws to a close, the catechumens receive a rosary—a reward that has no equal. However, it happens at times that the Missionaries have not enough of them to supply all the candidates. Thus, during their dinner one Sunday, the Sisters heard lamentations at the door. Going to ascertain the cause, they found a group of young girls from a distant village. In tears they explained: "This is the fourth time that we have come to receive our rosaries, but today again we must go home without them. The Fathers have no more and we are very much disappointed. We cannot return home like pagans."

These girls have not hesitated to walk several times the twelve miles that separate them from Toma to get the much coveted prize. Fortunately, the Sisters had a number of rosaries

which they immediately sent to the Missionaries, thereby enabling them to complete the distribution and please everyone.

A few minutes later the girls returned triumphant, overjoyed, and most profuse in their thanks.

Under the influence of grace and love, confidence toward Mary is deeply imbedded in the souls of the Sudanese and they frequently give their good Mother testimonies of this love. The recitation of the rosary is very popular among them, not only during the months of May and October, when it is recited in common at church; but throughout the year Mary's children never grow weary telling their beads.

The sweet name of Mary is held in high veneration; many of the neophytes ask for it in Baptism, and others add it to their first name.

The young girls are happy and proud to belong to the Sodality of Mary and they show themselves worthy of this beautiful title. Before class the children never fail to go and kneel before the statue of their heavenly Mother to seek her intercession. As for the old people, they like to greet their beloved Mother in their own naive manner; moreover, the Hail Mary with the Our Father are usually the only prayers which the aged can commit to memory.

In all their needs and difficulties it is to Mary that the children of the Sudan have recourse, and she is pleased to make them feel the effects of her motherly protection.



Knowledge of God is instilled in their hearts while they learn the three R's.

A Day at a North African Mission

IN A LITTLE HOUSE hidden under palm trees, a bell has softly rung. The Missionary Sister recognizes it as the Master's call to begin work in His vineyard and she joyfully responds to it, offering to her Divine Model every minute of the coming day.

She dons her white livery and hastens to the chapel, where the Divine Guest resides night and day. Prayer, Meditation, Mass, Communion: blessed sources whence the faithful servant of the Lord draws the strength to accomplish her daily duties and the necessary graces to spread around her the fire of holy charity. Then follows the hours for putting into practice the Master's lessons and to do His work.

There are many tasks to fulfill in this humble dwelling! I will not tell you the cares of

TO THE VERY REVEREND PROCURATORS OF THE MISSIONS
WITH ALL MY RESPECTS
AND WITH THE REQUEST THAT THEY
PUBLISH IN THEIR MISSIONARY MAGAZINES
THE FOLLOWING SALUTATION:

Greetings of Cardinal Costantini to the Missionaries.

Rome, Italy
January 15, 1953

As I resign from my duties as Secretary to the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda after seventeen years of assiduous and agreeable work, in collaboration with His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect, I address to all the Missionaries, to the Native Clergy and to the Sisters in the Missions—and above all to their Excellencies the Bishops—my most cordial greetings.

The Osservatore Romano of January 12 and 13 has thus reported the ceremony in which I was notified of my recent nomination:

"His Eminence Cardinal Costantini, after having expressed a thought of gratitude towards the Sovereign Pontiff, declared that he accepted this high honor as an acknowledgment of the work accomplished by missionaries the world over. In fact, only recently he received a letter from a missionary who, happy over this appointment—the news having reached even those far-off regions—told him of the profound consolation of the Missionaries, the Catechists, and of all who are sacrificing themselves on the battlefield of the Faith, because they realize that the new Cardinal is one of theirs: a Missionary.

"And that is why the first greeting of the Most Eminent Cardinal Costantini was addressed to the heroic soldiers of the Missions and to the valiant Native Clergy of these young Christian communities."

To my greetings I add the wish of a holy and fruitful apostolate, taking from St. Paul the very words he addressed to the new Church in Thessalonica: "And may the Lord make you to increase and abound in charity towards one another, and towards all men . . ." (Thes. 3:12.)

signed: Card. Celso Costantini

the one who at the head of the Community, directs it with solicitude, nor those of the procuratrix who often finds her purse too light to settle her accounts; I will not stop either to consider the more modest labor of the Sister charged with laundry or the kitchen. In whatever way it may be, each one does her duty and so contributes to the one aim: the conversion of Africa. Follow me rather today in the different apostolic works confided to our care.

At eight o'clock the bell announces the opening of school, workrooms and dispensary. The crowd is already great at the gate; little tots who come to the nursery while their mothers work; school girls with their books, while those of the workrooms have their lace or a flake of wool to spin; finally, the basket-makers who carry their artistical piece of work on their heads.

The teacher presides at the entrance of her pupils; Arabs and colonists elbow one another to their places. The Sister inquires about sick parents, encourages the timid, restores the tricksters to order, and when all have entered, prayer begins, because all learn to ask God for their daily bread. Almost all, without distinction of religion, like to salute Our Lady of Africa.

This first duty fulfilled, one soon hears the "ba," "be," "bi," of the beginners while the more advanced scholars penetrate the mysteries of grammar and arithmetic.

A signal will be given from time to time to interrupt that hard labor and allow the children a little leisure to amuse themselves.

While these were entering in good order, the sick were jostling one another at the dispensary door, and as the Sister appears there is a great clamor, for each one wishes to be the first served. There are some patients who have walked several hours to come to be taken care of by the "Sister." They wish at all costs to have their wounds dressed promptly in order to reach their "gourbis" (native homes) before the great heat of the day.

The Sister's voice can hardly be heard over those of her clients. "Well, let's see, who came first?"

Peace is immediately restored. All human miseries are assembled here; fever, frightful wounds, often eaten by worms; deep cuts, the result of quarrels; diseases of the scalp, breast, eyes, nose, ears, and what not.

Then a long history of those whom we must console, encourage, and even reprimand once in a while, begins. Listen to some:

"Sister, my back aches, my legs hurt, my arms pain. I cannot see any more. Give me some medicine."

"But Grandma, your ills are the effects of Age! Are you not eighty years old?"

"Sister, my husband argues with me every day, and he strikes me. Give me some medicine so that he won't get angry any more."

To make the beseecher understand that submission and patience are often the best means to employ in the present case is a very difficult thing.

"Sister, my child is going to die. I don't know what is the matter with him, look."

The woman presents a little being suffering from rickets who has but a breath of life and waits his passport to join the angels.

"Sister, my mother is very sick, she cannot come so far as this, she wants you to come to see her."

Name, address, all is written down and a visit promised for the afternoon.

There are others, who, confident as little children, bring us their goats and their cows so that we may also cure them. Must not one, as the Apostle, make himself all to all to gain them all to Jesus Christ? God blesses our good will; even performing little miracles at times, in favor of our clients.

Now it is time for dismissal of class. The little dispensary court an instant ago almost deserted, is immediately invaded by the noisy troop of children, who, wishing to swallow a spoonful of syrup, rush towards the Sister, coughing desperately.

But the hour of prayer has just sounded. All know it and respect the time consecrated to God by the Missionaries. So the doors close without difficulty and it is at the feet of Our Saviour that the morning ends.

Time passes quickly in Community: dinner, recreation, where all share their joys as well as their troubles; recitation of the second part of the Rosary, and it is already time to recommence work.

While the classes and workrooms are resumed as in the morning, the dispensary Sister, with her companion, prepares for the afternoon. Armed with remedies, the two messengers of

Soothing sorrows while the body receives care.



God start off on their errand of charity to the sick.

They also call at the pupils' homes to inquire of the parents, if the latter profit well from the lessons received. The Sisters are always glad to meet and encourage the old scholars who, because of Moslem laws, are strictly secluded.

The Sisters do their best to satisfy all those who demand their care, comforting those who suffer and very often instructing in the Eternal Truths the dying to whom Providence has directed their steps. Who can conceive the happiness which overwhelms a Missionary Sister when she may pour regenerating water on the head of a moribund?

The Sisters keep in mind the principal object of their visits and leave a good word to all, which produces unexpected effects. Thus, one day in leaving a house, the apostle of charity said: "Continue to do good and avoid evil, because God rewards those whose hearts are free from all sin."

"You are right, Sister, God rewards the good. You are good; He will put you in Heaven, but I have sinned and I know that he punishes evil, there remains for me but damnation—"

At the workrooms the girls are taught to weave oriental rugs.



"Why no, you are mistaken. God is all merciful and clement. He pardons all those who repent of their sins. Ask Him pardon and He will forgive you your sins."

"Oh! Is it really true? God pardons a sinner?" And in the excitement of her surprise and joy, she called her neighbor; "Zohra, come listen to what Sister says: God pardons those who are sorry for their sins."

These two women are so happy over this good news that they go to find a third one and then a fourth, delighted to teach, in their turn, the great mercy of God.

Could one remain insensible to similar scenes? Would not a Missionary Sister's day be well spent, even if she but cast a ray of hope in the heart of a poor Moslem? But the time flies and one must think of returning.

Someone calls again: "Come quickly, my little boy has just fallen into the fire!"

In a little hut, stretched on a mat, the baby scarcely gives a sign of life.

After an application of remedy, the Sisters retire. The mother is ignorant of the mystery of love which has just been operated before her! Henceforth, she guards an angel who will soon plead for the Light of Faith for her before the throne of God.

Six o'clock has just struck when the happy "excursionists" reach home. Just a few minutes to put the house in order and the bell rings for the Visit to the Blessed Sacrament; the time to offer to the Master the flowers gathered for Him and to thank Him for the graces of the day which is ending in recollection and preparation for the combats of the following day.

How pleasant is the evening reunion, when each, forgetting her fatigues, relaxes in a cheerful recreation. Let us listen to one of the Sisters speaking of the work with which she is charged, for we have entered the workrooms.

"Old Kheira came to help in the dyeing this morning and while the skeins of multicolored wool swayed in the wind, she listened to me giving the little workers their daily lesson in morals. The good old woman admired all she heard:

"Sister, what you say is wonderful. Why did you not come any sooner to teach us all these things? We, poor women, would not be so ignorant as we are!"

Tourists frequently visit the workroom. Some ladies having admired the beautiful carpets and tapestry which the children have just finished, asked one of the little ones if the Sisters did not teach them anything else but weaving.

(Please turn to page 9)

A New Africa

Will Catholicism or Communism prevail?

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH is taking a great part in the formation of a New Africa through the zeal and enthusiasm of a multitude of Missionaries of all nationalities. Convinced that any true culture must be firmly grounded on Christian principles, they are giving the African all that is best in culture while respecting his own character and the environment in which he must live. The Missionaries perceive too that the African is receptive to their teaching, that the grace of God prepares the way for them and produces results far beyond their own calculations. Is not three African Bishops, almost five hundred African priests, over two hundred and sixty African Brothers and twelve hundred African Sisters in the territory of the White Fathers alone a tangible proof of this?

The greater part of Uganda is already solidly Christian, the mandated territories of Ruanda and Urundi are witnessing mass movements towards the Catholic Church of extraordinary intensity, while within the past years a great movement of conversion has risen in the Northern territory of the Gold Coast, with which the Missionaries are hardly able to cope. Throughout the continent the Africans are stretching out their arms to the Catholic Church and will

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only join with others if she is unable to give them assistance.

Herein lies the reason for the Missionaries' joy, but also an explanation of their anxiety; for is it not well known that the Communists are striving in every way possible to win over the Africans?

Yes, the Missionaries are doing their part. The success or the failure of their endeavors depends on the spiritual and financial help they receive from countries which already have the great advantage of the Catholic Faith and the Christian culture which everywhere accompanies it. The Missionaries are crying for more workers and means that they may erect breakwaters and dikes against their enemies.

AFRICAN PRELATE GOES TO GOD

The sad news of the death of Monsignor Luka Serwanga just reached us. It is believed that Monsignor was the first native priest in Africa to have been honored with the title of Domestic Prelate. One of the most prominent members of the African clergy in the Vicariate of Uganda, Monsignor Serwanga celebrated his silver jubilee in the priesthood last June. At the time of his death he was superior of the Mulajje mission, which was founded in 1914.

Funeral services in the mission church were presided over by the Most Reverend Joseph Cabana, Vicar Apostolic of Uganda. Bishop Kiwanuka, Vicar Apostolic of Masaka, officiated. Ecclesiastical and governmental dignitaries attending the funeral included Bishop Billington of Kampala, many Monsignori, the Prime Minister and Chief Justice of Buganda, and Chiefs of the neighboring Provinces.

Msgr. Serwanga was made Papal Chamberlain in 1947. He was chosen to preach a Holy Year retreat in each of the Vicariates' 26 mission stations in 1950. In reward for his devoted and enlightened zeal, the Holy Father elevated him to the rank of Domestic Prelate with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor in 1951.

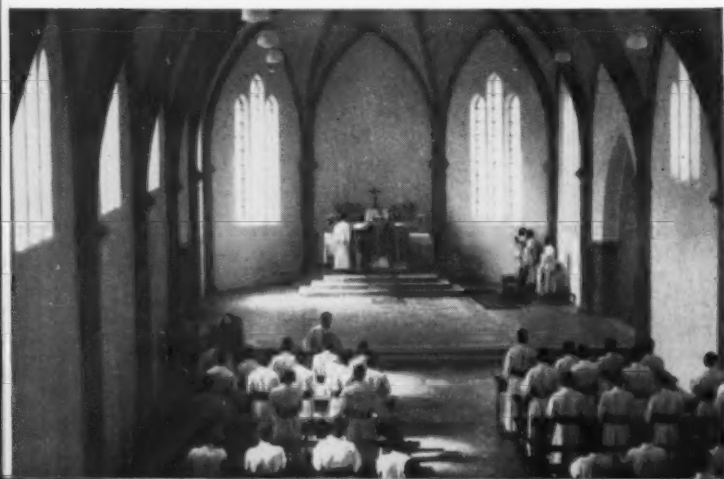
Reaching

"Africa must be converted by the Africans," said His Holiness Pope Pius XI. This being also the opinion of Cardinal Lavigerie, their Founder, the White Fathers have concentrated on the establishment of the Native Clergy, who now number almost 500 priests; and from among whom three were chosen to be consecrated Bishops. The first missions are now in their hands.



Every morning in all parts of Africa the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to God by Native Priests trained by the Missionaries.

Over 2100 seminarians are preparing for the priesthood.



The Most Reverend A. Bigirumwami, in Ruanda, imparting the first blessing to his consecration. His Excellency is the first Bishop in the territory of the

y The Goal



...wami Vicar Apostolic of Nyundo Vicariate
... blessing to his people immediately following
... is the first African Priest to become Bishop
... story of the White Fathers.

The training of African nuns by the White Sisters has also brought about amazing results. In their 16 Native Novitiates, 700 girls are preparing for the religious life, while 1200 professed Sisters work side by side with them in the missions. When they are judged capable of shouldering the responsibility, the White Sisters leave their well established missions in charge of the African Sisters. They are then free to start another mission.

The African Sisters are not only trained to become teachers, nurses and social service workers, but also for all other kinds of work.



The African Sisters become proficient teachers.





The newly ordained priest gives his blessing to his former teachers.

A Cause For Great Rejoicing

Mandyakuy, in French West Africa, witnesses the birth to the sacerdotal life of the first Bobwele priest.

THE CHURCH AT MANDYAKUY being too small to accommodate the large number who would assist at the ordination of Rev. John Kwene, His Excellency Bishop Lesourd sent a White Brother to construct a shelter to protect the congregation against the hot rays of the sun. With the best of good will, the Christians also offered their services.

His Excellency, Bishop Montclos, P.A., assisted at the ceremony as well as some forty White Fathers, several of whom had been stationed at this mission. They were happy to help us in thanking God for our first Bobwele vocation. The presence of the seminarians from Koumi gave the ceremony a magnificent and imposing uplift by the order maintained as well as by their pure Gregorian chant.

During the sermon Bishop Lesourd told the congregation that the reign of God was now established in their country, since they had a prophet of their own race to transmit the word of God to them and a priest to offer the Holy Sacrifice in their name. His Excellency concluded, "His power of intercession with God for you is greater for he is your own; he is of the Bobwele race!"

After the ordination the crowds gathered around the balcony of the mission to offer presents to the elect of the day. His Excellency

appeared very happy in contemplating the first priest of this mission in sacerdotal vestments.

Addressing those who had assembled around him, Father John took for theme the incredulity of the Apostle St. Thomas who would not believe in the Resurrection of our Lord until he could verify it himself by seeing our Lord with his own eyes and putting his hand in the wound of our Lord's side. "Neither could you," he said, "believe that a Bobwele could become a priest, but now you can believe because you see one!"

Father John also urged the Catholic parents to bring up well their children, because, he added: "The seed of a vocation is often given to young children." Then Father encouraged all the Christians to prove their gratitude to God for the gift of Faith by keeping their hearts pure, since they were the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Christians, catechumens and numerous pagans who assisted at the ordination, were astounded at the grandeur of the ceremony. The following day Father John celebrated his first Mass.

The ordination of our first priest is a cause of great rejoicing for us here at Mandyakuy mission which was founded in 1922. Eight more young Bobweles are in the Seminary and many religious vocations are being developed among the girls. Not only is this event a great consolation for the missionaries, but it is also a stimulant to more fervor in extending the reign of our dear Lord in this part of Africa.

Mother St. Vaast, W.S.

Momentous Event

THE WHITE SISTERS, who, for years, have concentrated on the training of their African Sisters in 16 Novitiates that they themselves founded for African girls, are now witnessing an event of tremendous importance in the history of the Dark Continent. One of their 16 diocesan Congregations founded in Belgian Territory, namely Ruanda, in the first decade of the 20th century, has now reached enough maturity for self-government.

At their last Chapter which took place very recently out of their own ranks the first Superior General, Mama Tereza, was elected in succession to the White Sister who had previously been at the head of the Congregation. Four other African Sisters were also chosen to form the Council. While Mama Filomena became Assistant, Mama Virginia, Mama Krystome and Mama Stanislas were made Councilors.

The Congregation of the Benebikira (Daughters of Mary) is the second African Congregation founded by the White Sisters, to reach this ideal stage of autonomy.

"Africa must be converted by the Africans," said His Holiness Pope Pius XI. With this aim well in view, the White Sisters' ambition is and has always been to train their African Sisters to such a degree of efficiency that they might become totally self-governed. Today, they see one of their most beautiful dreams realized. Not only do the White Sisters work side by side with their 1200 professed African nuns in their numerous hospitals, dispensaries, leprosaria and schools, but the African nuns have now reached the point when two of their Congregations can run their own Missions and do it very efficiently indeed.

This is one of the greatest achievements of the White Sisters in Africa. Now they can gradually step aside and find their way to other parts of the Continent, the darkest, where the light of the Holy Gospel has not yet dawned upon the poor pagans.

While paying tribute to the wonderful prog-

OUR FRONT COVER

Yes, this little tot from the Belgian Congo has decided that she will be a Sister. Attending regularly one of the White Sisters' primary schools, she is often found gazing pensively at the African Sister who is her teacher. Africans are proud of their religions and we too . . .

ress of the African Sisters, we may well look forward to a very bright future, for Africa is indeed THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

A DAY AT A NORTH AFRICAN MISSION

{ Concluded from page 4 }

"Oh! Yes, Madam," replied the child, "the Sisters also teach us the words of God."

And she began to recite the Commandments almost word by word.

In leaving, the visitor asked the gardener, Mohammed, if he were glad to have his daughter attend the workroom.

"Why shouldn't I be?" replied Mohammed. "Since my daughter comes to the Sisters we do not know her any more; she has become docile, obliging and learns things that we, Arabs, were ignorant of until now. Her mother urged her one day to tell a lie (inveterate habit among the natives), 'No,' replied the little one, 'it is not right, Sister said that we must never lie!'"

Is it not admirable to see with what docility these hearts accept the teaching which is given to them?

* * * *

The last sound of the bell puts an end to the conversation. The good Master once again receives the Missionary Sisters and echo of their prayer dies away softly at His feet.

Repose will be sweet after this new day entirely spent in working for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

—By a White Sister.

*White Sister and African Sister
work side by side.*



A Victim of Leprosy

Sr. Beatrice has an exciting day!

WE HAD BEEN INFORMED that an old man, a victim of leprosy, was dying unattended in an isolated spot several hours from the mission: that is to say, one of the most abandoned and unfortunate of creatures was near death. Jesus had a sort of predilection for them and cured many in His journeys through Galilee with a word from His Divine Lips. We cannot, as He, produce any such miracle, but we pray that He will permit us to be at least a humble reflection of His Goodness.

After three hours we entered the village, crossed it, and a short distance further on we found the invalid. He was sitting before his hut and reminded one of Job seated on a heap of dung. Both his hands had been eaten away by the horrible disease and ugly open sores gave forth an almost unbearable stench and it was evident that he often went hungry.

At our approach he raised his eyes and we were struck by the gentle resigned expression on his face. He replied very simply to our questions without criticism or reproach, but admitted the food thrown to him from a distance was not enough to satisfy his hunger and that no one at all was the least bit interested in him. Then as if on impulse, he cried in a pleading voice: "Mama, please take me back to the mission."

Tears stood in his eyes and we backed away a short distance to discuss what could be done. True, it seemed that would be the best solution: he would receive food and care, and could be instructed in the truths of our holy religion—but whom could we get to move him? In this part of Africa the native has a horror of the disease and is not easily persuaded to consent to any such task, so it is understandable our proposition was coldly received by the two men from the mission who had acted as our guides. "Let us pray," I whispered to my companion, "God will help us."

A moment later we turned towards the two young men: "You will not consent to carry this man back to the mission, but you will help us make a stretcher so that we can carry him back ourselves, will you not? Abashed by so direct a question, they could not refuse. We ordered two little trees to be cut down and the bark, which had been removed with care, was cut into strips to bind the branches which formed the couch; some dry leaves piled on top succeeded in giving the improvised stretcher an air of comfort.

While we were thus working, our poor hungry invalid consumed the little food we could give him while following our every movement with his large pleading eyes. The time had come to start on our way but the two mission guides still had not taken seriously our offer to carry him ourselves—if not they or us, then whom? When they realized we had every intention of carrying out our good resolve, their big hearts softened and repented: "No, mama," one of them cried, "as true as my name is Stephano, you will not carry this man," and fitting his actions to his words, he and his companion gently lifted the invalid unto the pile of leaves and we were on our way. Brave men, these two, for it was an act of heroism and we were deeply touched. The odor exuding from the open sores was such that those on the trail avoided meeting us, but our two good samaritans continued on their way, without flinching, to complete their act of charity.

The reward of Our Divine Master was not

The White Sisters care for thousands of such victims in their six Leprosaria and at dispensaries, and while assuaging their physical condition they encourage these victims to make the most of their sufferings to win a higher place in Heaven.



long in coming. On entering the village, we noticed a sort of little package in back of a hut that seemed to move. On investigation, we found an infant, covered with sores and almost without life. The mother screamed at us, "Do not touch"; but bending over I gathered the little mite in my arms and asked, "Won't you let me care for her?" "Yes, mama, but take her away from here. She will die and draw down a curse on all of us; throw her in the brush, anything, but do not let her remain here."

It was very evident that the baby's life was fading away, so at the very first opportunity we placed her under the protection of the Blessed Virgin by baptizing her Maria. Our hearts swelled in gratitude to our good Heavenly Mother for sending us this little angel which she confided into our care.

After this happy little delay, we continued on our way with the two natives carrying the stretcher in front, while we followed with little Maria.

Our arrival with this double bounty was a happy one. The invalid was made comfortable in an empty hut while the baby was given into the care of one of the Christian mothers in the village. But her stay with us was a short one, for she did not tarry. It was as if she were anxious to join the angels and saints in heaven to give thanks and praise to God for the great grace He had bestowed on her.

It was not difficult to instruct our patient as charity had opened his heart and his eyes to the truth of the Christian religion. As it was evident his end was near and in view of his excellent dispositions, he received the Sacrament of Baptism as soon as his instructions permitted. He was given the name of Joseph and now is fervently preparing to receive his First Holy Communion, hoping that after this big day, God will grant him to exchange this life of suffering for the unending bliss of heaven.

Oh, what will not be the joys of Paradise for such as this poor victim of leprosy! Who would not like to obtain them for other of these victims? If so, why not join the SOCIETY FOR AID TO LEPROSY PATIENTS?

If you are interested, for particulars apply to:

THE SOCIETY FOR AID TO
LEPROSY PATIENTS

348 Comstock Street
New Brunswick, N. J.

THE KIKUYU

KENYA IS SITUATED about 375 miles from the east coast of Africa and enjoys a climate comparable to the temperate zones in September. Mt. Kenya rises 19,626 feet above this green cool land as if calling attention to the beauty of the country which is marked by a number of mountains, punctuated by many cataracts falling with crystal loveliness from varying heights.

The land has long been an attraction for tourists seeking the pleasure of the wonders of nature unspoiled by the advances of so-called civilization. Here they find the gorges of Thika, the rugged ravines of the rivers, Chania and Thika with their rushing water over majestic falls.

The wild flowers of the country defy description for they are in profusion and varied. Roses, lilies, cornflowers and calla lilies are everywhere in abundance. There are red lilies and a purple lotus which would move the average American home gardener to envy.

Coffee was first planted there almost fifty years ago and the success of its growth attracted a great number of planters until it became one of the principal industries, the other two being cattlebreeding and ostrich farms.

Here too can be found nature's handwork in the coloring of the birds native to the country. There are several varieties of starlings, a small finch with a red bill, a green cuckoo, pigeons of every description, and a tiny bird with dark gray and blue plumage. All the birds with the exception of a small warbler are silent.

The Kikuyu live among this beauty in conical huts which have a roof of straw or dried reeds and resemble large beehives. A visitor must bend low to enter the house for it has but one opening; a small, low doorway. The average home has a partition which divides the family's living and sleeping quarters from an area used by the sheep and chickens at night. Around a fireplace consisting of three blackened stones where a few embers burn throughout the day and night, the family takes its meals. Polygamy is practiced and each wife of the master has a hut of her own in the yard.

The Kikuyu have never known slavery and are proud and independent. Each village is governed by a council of elders.

As other pagan tribes, the Kikuyu believe in one God; but since He is supposed to be good and does not trouble them, they do not bother about Him. But they also believe in evil spirits



The infant mortality in Africa is very high, eighty percent in some places. At the missions the White Sisters give prenatal and postnatal care to the women, thus enabling them to have healthy children. In the mission districts the death rate is much lower.

that do them harm and they must offer sacrifices through the witch-doctors to appease them. Witch-doctors and witchcraft play an important role in the lives of these people.

Into this beautiful and primitive land the White Sisters first settled in August, 1907 about four miles from Holy Trinity mission, which had been founded two years previously by the Fathers of the Holy Ghost. Only our Sisters who lived through these first days can do justice to the story of Holy Family mission, Thika, so far from any European center, without any means of communication with the civilized world and in a desolate country where no assistance could be expected from the inhabitants who had never seen a white woman before and were timid and distrustful.

The White Sisters resolutely began to study the language and when they were sufficiently proficient in it they opened a dispensary and began the mission work with the care of the sick, which is the best means of gaining the confidence of the natives. These soon found their way to the Sisters' door begging for medicine. Those who were not able to come were visited by the Sisters in their homes.

Shortly after their arrival, a great famine spread over the country, which gave the Missionaries an opportunity to prove their devotedness and win the confidence of the Africans.

These mountaineers died like flies. Many of them, won over by the good example and kindness of the Sisters, died peacefully after receiving the Sacrament of Baptism.

A great number were saved by the distribution of generous supplies of food. The Holy Family Mission furnished enough maize for the seeding of their fields so that, they might have a better harvest to look forward to.

This was the beginning of a spiritual harvest as well, and at present there is a village composed of Christian couples and swarming with children. At the mission there is a large orphanage to take care of the abandoned little ones and schools for the education of the pagan as well as Catholic children.

Sister Mary Loretta.

Sister was giving a catechism lesson to a shrivelled up old man who was under instruction for Baptism.

Sister: "Come, Kamwamba, repeat the commandments after me. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

Kamwamba: "I will love the Lord my God."

Sister: "Very well, but repeat what I said. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

Kamwamba: "I will love the Lord my God."

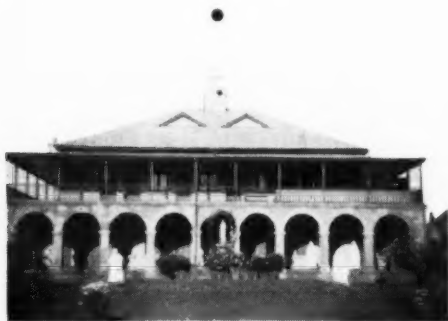
Sister insisted once more, but it was useless.

The old man exclaimed: "Why do you want me to command others? Who will listen to me? I, Kamwamba, I love God with all my heart and I will love Him still more after my baptism."

Father Forgive Them...

Latest news from our missions among the Mau Mau

Just as the magazine was going to press we learned that while Easter bells were ringing to tell of the great joy of the Resurrection, the situation in Kenya was at its worst. Our Sisters are in an area which is close to the capital of Kenya, and they are surrounded on all sides by the Mau Mau. At the mission Asiatic as well as African children are sheltered and they attend the two schools run by the White Sisters.



Thika Convent where the Sisters hope to be soon reunited and carry on their work among the Kikuyus.

ON THE 7TH OF APRIL at midnight, Mother Superior woke up the whole community; the Mau Mau had been seen coming down from Mt. Kenya armed with PANGAS (native knives about two feet long) iron bars, etc., and making for Thika. They were then within three miles of the mission. The Sisters dressed and waited; but, thank God, the Mau Mau did not come any nearer that night, though the feelings of all can be imagined during those long hours of waiting.

All the Europeans from the neighborhood had been coming to the convent to sleep during the past few weeks, the private rooms being occupied by Mothers with small children. The District Commissioner declared that evacuation was now obligatory, at least in part. It was decided to send the 67 Asiatic children, accompanied by some of the Sisters, to our various missions. Some were received in our secondary school in Mombasa where they can continue their education.

Mother Superior and some Sisters were allowed to stay with the African children to the number of 60. It was a sad moment when the

community was obliged to break up, and those who had spent their whole missionary life in Thika, forty years or more, did not try to hide their tears. The police have now taken over the Convent and use it as their headquarters.

We ask for prayers for our people of Kenya. The fervent Kikuyus, who wish to remain faithful to their Faith, pray as they never prayed before. They fully realize that unless God gives them the extraordinary strength which they need to face torture and death, they will not stand the test. Sad to say a few, under horrifying pressure, have apostatized, but many remain firm. A man had his eyes plucked out and a young girl was left half strangled in her hut because neither would take the oath. Another, an old woman, when threatened seized her crucifix and holding it up, dropped on her knees bravely declaring; "On the day of my baptism I swore fidelity to Christ. I will never take another oath, even though you kill me!"

We ask prayers too for the conversion of the Mau Mau. For them we can plead as did Our Lord on the Cross: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"

Sr. Mary John, W.S.

Kikuyu Mothers with their children love to visit the Sisters and talk about home problems.





